SOME NEW BOOKS.

Ruskin's Letters to Charles Ellot Norton. The two volumes collectively entitled letters of John Ruekin to Charles Eliot Norton, edited by Mr. Norton and published by Houghton, Mifflin & Co., constitute an indispensable supplement of the autobiographical fragment "Præterita," which was mainly occupied with an account of Ruskin's childhood and youth and ended practically with the year 1856, when he was 37 years old. These letters begin in 1856 and continue until 1887, when the productive part of Ruskin's life was drawing to a close. They throw a copious light not only upon incidents in the author's career but also on his ideas concerning a multitude of important or interesting subjects. It would be impossible, also, to exaggerate the charm of the frankness with which the writer talks to his friend about the topics in which for the moment he happens to feel concerned. A word should be said about the mode in which this correspondence is presented. In the editor's preface, which, by the way, forms a yestibule worthy of the temple, it is pointed out that the method to be adopted in editing these letters was not altogether easy to determine. They might, of course, have been strung together on a consecutive narrative of Ruskin's life but for the fact that two excellent

biographies already exist. Or, again, they might be illustrated largely by passages from the author's other writings bearing upon the topics touched upon and by full accounts of matters which are herein merely mentioned. This method, however, would have made the editorial matter seem disproportionate to the text. Mr. Norton accordingly decided to assume that the reader would have a general knowledge of Ruskin's life and writings and to treat the letters as having an independent interest of their own, merely supplying a brief note here and there to explain the conditions under which they were written. The editor does not even attempt to outline in an introduction a nature which was in the highest degree complex, full of contradictory elements, which Ruskin never succeeded in reconciling so as to obtain steady equilibrium and tranquillity of soul or persistent fixity of aim. Evidently Mr. Norton was too fond of Ruskin personally to weigh him rigorously in the balance either as a man or as a writer. He tells us that in preparing these letters for the press and reading them in a mass consecutively after an interval of many years they have touched him even more deeply than when they came to him one by one. "Taken all together." he says, "they form a tragic record of the perplexities of a great and generous soul, the troubles of a tender heart, the spendshrift use, and, at last.

The first reference to the United States will be found in a letter penned in December, 1856, to Mr. Norton, who was then staying in Rome. "I can quite under-stand," says Ruskin, "how, coming from a fresh, pure and very ugly country like America, there may be a kind of thirst upon you for ruins and shadows, which nothing can easily assuage; that, after the scraped cleanliness, and business, and fussiness of it [America], mildew and mould may be meat and drink to you, and languor the best sort of life, and weeds a bewitch ment; I mean the unnatural sort of weeds that only grow on old bricks and mortar and out of cracks in mosaic (all the Campagna used to look to me as if its grass were grown over a floor); and the very sense of despair which there is about Rome must be healthful and balmy after the over-hopefulness and getting-onness of America; and the very sense that nobody but that all is drifting into an unspelt, unsummed, undistinguished heap of helplessness, must be a relief to you, coming out of that atmosphere of calculation. I can't otherwise account for your staying at

sinking into such glooms-it is a sorrow-

Ruskin goes on to say that he supposes that his correspondent may wonder at his impertinence in calling America an ugly country. "But I have just been seeing, e exclaimed, "a number of landscapes by an American painter of some repute; and the ugliness of them is Wonderful. I see that they are true studies, and that the ugliness of the country must be Unfathomable. And a young American lady has been drawing under my direction in Wales this summer, and when she came back I was entirely silenced and paralyzed by the sense of a sort of helplessness in her that I couldn't get at; an entire want of perception of what an English painter would mean by beauty or interest in a subject. Her was had been so accustomed to ugliness that she caught it wherever she could find it, and, in the midst of beautiful stony cottages and rugged rocks and wild foliage, would take this kind of thing la facsimile of the drawing is inserted) for her main subject; or, had to draw a mountain pass, she would select a turn in the road just where the liberally minded proprietor had recently mended it and put a new plantation on the hill opposite." Ruskin adds that in this young American lady "the instinct of deliverance is not yet awake, and I don't know how to awaken it. In you it is in its fullest energy, and so you like weeds and

the old tumbled to pieces things at Rome.' The next allusion to this country occurs in a letter addressed to Mr. Norton at Cambridge, in 1857, after his return from Europe. "I was very thankful." Ruskin writes, "to know you had arrived safely, and without getting any blue put on your wings by that Atlantic: and I incline to conceive you as very happy in the neighborhood of these rattlesnakes, bears, &c., though it seems to me much the sort of happiness (compared with ours at home here! that a poor little chimney sweeper is enjoying below on the doorsteps, to whom I have just imparted what consolation there is in sixpence for the untowardness of his fate, his master having declared that if 'he didna get a job. he should stop oot all day.' You have plenty 'jobs', of course, in your fine new country; but you seem to me, neverthe less, 'stopping out all day.' I envy your power of enjoyment, however, and respect it, and, so far, understand it; for truly it must be a grand thing to be in a country that one has good hope of, and which i slways improving, instead of, as I am, in the position of the wicked man in one of the old paraphrases my mother used to

Fixed on his house he leans; his house And all its props decay — He holds it fast; but, while he holds. The tottering frame gives way.

Elsewhere in the same letter Ruskin says: "I know what kind of oreen it is for your American art, whatever else may flourish among the rattlesnakes, that the first studies of nature which I get sent me here by way of present are of dead dies of heotic red and flying gold of the ruined woodlands' by a young ledy. I have accepted them gratefully.

draw tute henceforward." He had just beard of Mrs. Stowe's being at Durbam, and of her saying when the librarian offered to show her some notable manuscripts, that she preferred "going in a boat on It puzzled Ruskin to account the river. for Mrs. Stowe's conceding the title of "River" to the water at Durham, or conceiving the idea of its floating a boat, seeing that it must, in relation to an American river, bear much the aspect of a not very large town drain. "You never told me enough," he says, "about what Americans feel when first they see one of our 'celebrated' rivers; Yarrow, or Tweed, or Teviot or such like: consisting, in all probability, of as much water as usually obtained by a mischievous boy from the parish pump, circling round a small stone, with a water wagtail on it.'

those whose hearts were engaged in it. takes for the time the desire for the interchange of letters. In August, 1861, he had written to Norton: "I'm so glad you think hopefully about the war. It interests me no more than a squabble between black and red snts. It does not matter whether people are free or not, so far as I can see, till, when free, they know how to choose master." That sentence would suffice show that Ruskin was a disciple of Carlyle. Recurring to the subject in January, 186?, Ruskin says that "as for said business [the civil war] I am too lazy to care anything about it, unless I hear there's some chance of you or Lewell or Emerson being shot, in which case I should remonstrate. For the rest, if people want to fight, my opinion is that fighting will be good for them, and I suppose when they're tired they'll stop. They've no Titians, nor anything worth thinking about, to spoil-and the rest is all one to me." In August, 1862, Ruskin is as unsympathetic as ever: "As for your American war, I still say, as I said at first-if they want to fight, they deserve to fight and to suffer It is entirely horrible and abominable, but nothing else would do. Do you remember Mrs. Browning's curse on America? I said at the time: 'She had no business to curse any country but her own.' But she, as it appeared afterward, was dying, and knew better than I against whom her words were to be recorded. We have come in for a proper share of suffering, but the strange thing is how many innocent suffer, while the guiltiest-Derby and d'Israeli and such like-are shooting grouse." In August, 1884, Ruskin had not in the least changed his mind: "Your American business is so entirely horrible to me that somehow it cuts you off from all possibility of my telling you any of my thoughts. It is the failure, of exceptional powers. Such just as if I saw you washing your hands genius, such high aims, such ardent, vet blood and whistling-and sentimentaloften ill directed efforts, and such great izing to me. I know you don't know what yet broken achievement, such splendors you are about, and are just as good and dear as ever you were, but I simply can't write to you while you are living peaceably in Bedlam." Ruskin's feeling was not allayed by the triumph of the North and the abolition of slavery. In September, 1865, he writes: "The war has put a gulf between all Americans and me, in that I do not care to hear what they think, or tell them what I think on any matter; and Lowell's work, and Longfellow's, is all now quite usaless to me." In March, 1866, however, he tells his correspondent: "Please be assured, as I think you must have been without my telling you, that when I would not write to you during the American war it was not because I loved you less but because I could no otherwise than by silence express the intensity of my adverse feeling to the things you were countenancing—and caus-ing; for, of course, the good men in America were the real cause and strength of the war Now it is past, I have put in my protest, and we are the same full friends as always. except only that I can't read American sentiment any more—in its popular form—and so can't sympathize with you in all

things, as before. Of many individual Americans, and especially some American writers, Ruskin spoke with keen appreciation. One evening during a sojourn at Geneva, in 1856, Mr. Norton lent Ruskin a volume of the poems of Lowell. The next day he got a etter about it: "I am truly obliged to you for showing me this book. Lowell must be animal spirit and fervor, is almost beyond anything I know, and it is very interesting to see, in the rest, the stern seriousness of a man so little soured so fresh and young at heart." Referring to "The Origin of Didactic Poetry," which appeared in the Atlantic Monthly, he said: "What a glorious thing of Lowell's that is-but it's too bad to quiz Pallas. I can stand it about anybody but her." In October, 1858, he tells his correspondent: "I have written your initials and mine in the two volumes of Lowell thew delightful the new preface is to the 1). He does me more good in my dull fits than anybody and makes me hopeful again. What a beautiful face he has! He reiterates the praise a little later: "Lowell does me more good than anybody, what between encouraging me and making me laugh. Mr. Knott [the allusion is to Lowell's poem "The Unhappy Lot of Mr Knott" | makes me laugh more than anything I know in the world-the punning is so rapid and rich, there's nothing near it but Hood, and Hood is so awful under his puns that one never can laugh." In December, 1858, Mr. Norton sent him Lowell's poem of "Godminster Chimes." Ruskin says of it: "Thank you for Lowell. It [the poem] is very beautiful, but not, I think, up to his work. Don't let him turn out any but perfect work (except in fun). I don't quite understand this. Where is 'Godminster'? How many hostile forms of prayer are in the bells of the place that woke him? Or where was it? 'Ointment from her eyes' is fine, read in the temper it was written in: but the first touch of it on the ear is disagreeable-too much of 'eye salve' in the notion." Of Lowell's Dante" he wrote to Mr. Norton in 1876: "It is very good; but the entire school of new moderns judge hopelessly out of these older ones, because you never admit the possibility of their knowing what we don't. The moment you take that all-knowing attitude the heavens are veiled. Lowell speaks of Dante as if Dante were a forward

schoolboy and Lowell his master." When Mr. Norton was in England in 1856 he dined at the house of Ruskin's father, who had an attractive place of some six or seven acres at Denmark Hill. A topic of the after dinner talk was Emerson's "English Traits," which was then a new book. All praised it. "How did he come to find out so much about us?" said the elder Mr. Ruskin, "especially as regards matters on which we keep quiet, and are reserved among ourselves?" The editor of these volumes recalls that this was the voice of the generation to which the elder Ruskin belonged. His son, speaking for himself and for his own generation, would hardly have used the like terms. Mr. Norton points out that one of the great changes in England during the nineteenth century was the breaking down of many of the old style walls within which the shy Englishman was wont to intreach himself, and that no English writer ever opened himself and his life to the public with more

Ruskin.

The editor records that in October, 1888, he passed some time with Ruskin in Kormandy, and the two went thence for a day r two to Paris, where they nad "the goo fortune to find Longfellow and his a able brother-in-law, Tom Appleton. Neither of them had previously met Ruskin. There could not be a pleasanter dinner than that which we had one evening at Meurice's. Ruskin, Longfellow and Appleton were each at his respectively unsurpassed best,

and when, late at night, the company broke

up the members parted from each other

as if all had been old friends."

We come on a good many references to Carly,e in the second of these volumes. Thus in August, 1870, Ruskin writes: You'll never make me miserable any more by thinking you may be right, and Carlyle Ruskin's feelings with regard to our ivil war, and his want of sympathy with wrong after all, when I see how you misread French war; this war is, on the one side, the French, the purest and intensest republicanism (choosing a fool for a leader and able to kick him off when it likes) joined o vanity, lust and lying-against, on the German side, a personal, hereditary, fendal government, as stern as Barbarossa's with a certain human measure of modesty decency and vivacity in its people. And dear old Carlyle—how thankful I am that he did his Friedrich exactly at the right time. It's the likest thing to a Providence

've known this many a year.' Ruskin did not concur with Mr. Norter the latter's disapproval of the revelations nade by Froude in his "Life of Carlyle" On the contrary, he told his correspondent: You had better have gone crazy for a nonth yourself than to have written that niggling and maggling article on Froude's misprints." Elsewhere he says: "Not that am with you in thinking Froude wrong about publishing the 'Reminiscences.' They are to me full of his [Carlyle's] strong in sight, and, in their distress, far more pa-thetic than the howlings of his earlier life about Cromwell and others. "Early in 1883 Mr. Norton had sent to his friend the "Letters of Emerson and Carlyle. which he had edited Abknowledging the receipt of them, Ruckin says: "The Emerson letters are infinitely sweet and wise though, here and there, unintelligible to C's, like all the words of him, published since his death have vered me, and partly angered, with their perpetual 'me miserum'-never seeming to feel the extreme ill manners of this perpetual whine; and, to what one dares not call an affected, but a quite unconsciously false extent. hiding the more or less of pleasure which a strong man must have in using his strength, be it but in heaving aside dust-heaps." Ruskin adds that "what in my own personal way I deeply regret and wonder at in him [Carlyle] is the perceptio n all nature of nothing between the stars and his stomach-his going, for instance, into North Wales for two months, and noting absolutely no Cambrian thing or event, but only increase of Carlylean bile. It seems that Ruskin thought Coloridge

had been vastly overrated as a philoso

pher, and that "his best poems were fever-

which nobody looks at nowadays, Ruskin

Of Mrs. Browning's "Aurora Laigh,

wrote when it came out, in December, 1856. You haven't, of course, read Mrs. Browning's 'Aurora Leigh,' or you would have spoken in your letter of nothing else. I only speak of it at the end of my letter, not to allow myself time to tell you anything about it, except to get it; and to get it while you are still in Italy." Of Swinburne's "Atalanta" he spoke with enthusiasm when it first saw the light. "Have you read," he asks his correspondent, "Swinburne's 'Atalanta,' the grandest thing ever yet done by a youth-though he is a demoniac youth? Whether he ever will be clothed and in his right mind. Heaven only knows. His foam at the mouth is fine meantime." Ruskin, like Matthew Arnold and Goethe, was disposed to put generally placed by Englishmen in the last half of the nineteenth century. "Why." he asks Mr. Norton, "do you call Byron insincere? I should call his faults 'incontinence of emotion.' I call him one of the sincerest though one of the vaines of men. There is not a line which he has written which does not seem to me as true as his shame for his clubfoot. He dresses his thoughts-so does Pope, so Virgilbut that is a fault, if a fault, of manner it is not dishonest. And the more I know whether of scenery or history, the truer I find him, through his manner. He is only half educated, like Turner, and is half a cockney, and wholly a sensualist, and a very different sort of person from a practical and thorough gentleman. But he is not insincere-and he cared for grief. and could understand all nobleness. If he were only at Venice now I think we should have got on with each other." Ruskin believed Dickens to be as little understood as Cervantes, and almost as mischievous. Writing about him in July 1870, he said: "I quite feel all that you say about Dickens, and of his genius or benovolence nobody, I believe, ever has spoken or ever will speak, more strongly than I. You will acquit me, I know, of jesiousy; you will agree with me in my acknowledge ment of his entire superiority to me in every mental quality, but one—the desire of truth without exaggeration. It is my stern desire to get at the pure facts, and nothing less or more, which gives me whatever power I have; it is Dickens's delight n grotesque and rich exaggeration which has made him, I think, nearly useless in the present day. I do not believe he has made any one more good natured. I think all his finest touches of sympathy are absolutely undiscovered by the British public but his mere caricature, his liberalism

and his calling the Crystal Palace 'Fairyland' have had fatal effects." Ruskin considered Jowett's translation Plato good for nothing, and informed his friend in October, 1876, that he should do one himself, as he had intended do fifteen years. The project was carried out to a certain extent. In July, 1879, he writes: "I am doing the 'Laws' of Plato thoroughly. Jowett's translation is a diagrace to Oxford, and how much to Plato if he could be disgraced more than by everybody's neglect of him—cannot be said, and I must get mine done all the more." Of Aristophanea, he says, in December, 1858: "What a fellow that Aristophanes was! And yet to be always in the wrong in the main, except in his love for Eschylus and the country. Did ever a worthy man do so much mischief on the face of the earth?" Lucretius he did not like, but of Virgil he wrote: "All you say of him is true-but, through and under all that, there is a depth and perfect-ness that no man has reached but he; just as that Siena arabesque, though in a bad style, is insuperable, so Virgil, in not a bad but a courtly and derivative style, had sterling qualities the most rare." Cervantee had been once described by Ruskin as "mischievous;" in a letter penned in August, 1870, he explains what he meant: "It,"Don Quixote' always affected me throughout with tears, not laughter. It was always throughout real chivalry to me, and it is precisely because the most touching valor and tenderness are rendered vain by mad-

ness, and because, thus vals. there ---

indiscreet - unreserve than smitteet of smitter to sugar, and shallow e-milient of grapher to stulgar, and shallow persons, and because of through, chivalry is thus in implication nectised of madasis and involved in stance, that I call the book so deadly. We chose ve, fastly, that Sainte-Beuve seemed to funktin a quite incurably and irravocably shallow person—one who knows everything, and with its exquisitely keen and right within his limits, but who is sure to be fatally wrong beyond them.

Ruskin's admiration of Verona is well known. Writing in 1886 to Mr. Northe, who was then in Italy, he tells him: Singly you leave yourself time enough for Verona. People always give the little time to Verona; it is my dearest place in Italy. If you are vindictive and want to take vangeance on me for depising Rome, write mera letter of abuse of Verona. But be sure to do it before you have seen it; you can't afterward." Almost the only thing in Verona that Ruskin could not show was the modern inhabitants. Revisiting the city in 1868, he says: "The horror of living among these foul Italian wretches living among these foul Italian wretches and seeing them behave exactly like dogs and flies among the tombs and churches of their fathers is flore than I can bear, with any power of rational speech left about

anything.

In Venice Russin went through so much hard, dry mechanical toll that he quite lost, before he left it, the charm of the place. "there is a glorious city in the Sea." a truthful person widd asy "there is a glorious city in the Mud.". There was, it seems, only one and in Vanice which he never lost the feeling of joy in; that was just half way between the end of the Gludecca and St. George of the Seaweed at sunset. 'If you tie your boat," he tells his correspond one of the posts there, you can see a once the Euganeans, where the sun goes down, and all the Aips and Venice behind you by this rosy similght; there is no other spot so beautiful. Near the Armenian convent is, however, very good also; the city is handsomer, but the place is not so simple and lonely."

Oddly enough, as he grew older, Ruskin

lost enthusiasm for the Alps. As early as 1888 he testifier that "the mountains are not what they were to me. A curious mathematical question keeps whispering itself to me, every now and then Why is ground at an angle of 40 degrees anything better than ground at an angle of 30 or of 20-or of 10-or of nothing at all? It is but ground after all. Ultimately, he came to look upon mountains with the eye of a hydraulic engineer rather than that of a landscape painter. In 1869 he writes to Mr. Norton: "You know I am going to redeem that Valley of the Rhone. It's too bad, and can't be endured any longer. I'm going to get civil to the Alpine Club, and show them how to be a club in-deed. Hercules against Hydra. If they won't attend to me I'll do one hillside myself. There shall not one drop of water go down to the Rhone from any hillside, unless I choose and when it does it shall water pretty:things all the way down. Before I die I hope to see a rampart across every lateral valley holding a pure, quiet lake full of fish, capable of six feet rise at any moment over as much surface as will take the drainings of the glaciers above it for a month. And if I don't mester the Rhone that way, they shall shut me up in Chillon for the rest of my days, if they like." In August of the same year, coming from Venice to Verons, Ruskin met an engineer who was negotiating a loan of 4,000,000 france for an aqueduct to Venice. Ruskin's comment on the conversation is: "Of course the thing to be done is to catch, and use, and guide the rain, when first heaven sends it. For 1,200 years the Venetians have been fighting vainly with the Brenta and its slime. Every wave of it is just so much gold running idly into the sea and dragging the ruins of kingdoms down with it. Catch it when it first fails and the arid south side of the Alps would be one garden, water clear and lovely in what portion of them was allowed to go down to the plain for its cultivation. Not a drop should be allowed to find its way into the sea from Lombardy, except as much as would make the Po navigable, as far at least as Pavia; or better. Casale; and the minor rivers

constant with clear water in one-fifth of Ruskin's interest in the subject of Italian irrigation was a persistent one. Somewhat later in the year last named he wrote to a Venetian banker a letter, the purport of which was to show that the question of the Venetian lagunes was insoluble, except when considered as one of many questions. tions connected with the water system of Lombardy. The elevation of the bed of the Po was, he said, the first evil to be dealt with, such elevation being merely the exponent of the quantity of waste water which was allowed to drain from the Alps, charged with soil it had no business to bring down, when every drop of t was absolutely a spangle of gold let fall from heaven." All that was necessary for the inhabitants of northern Italy to do, said Ruskin, was to "take the infinitesimally small trouble of ostohing said drop where it fell (and keeping it till they wanted it), instead of letting it drown the valleys of the Tioino and Adige, first, and then flood (eventually) Lombardy-in the mean time running waste into the lagunes and bordering all the plain with fever marsh.

In 1871. Ruskin bought in Lancashire, small place called Brantwood, an old house with five scree of rock and moor, which possessed one of the finest views in the north of England. He tells his correspondent that one of his reasons for getting the place is that he can fully command the winter sunsets, instead of losing them, as one does in London. He is thankful, also, for the sense of rest which he experiences at Brantwood, although, he adds, "it is greatly troubled and darkened and lowered by the horrible arrangement of there being women in the world, as well as mountains and stars and lambs and what else one might have been at peace with-but for those other creatures." To those conversant with the most tragical event of Ruskin's life the allusion will be unmistakable. We remark, however, that the lady who procured a divorce from Ruskin, on the nice of nullity of marriage. and who afterward married Millale, is not once mentibled in this corresponden nor in the editor's running comments. and the following significant statement the preface: "I have not printed," the

editor says. "all the letters which Ruskin wrote to me. In spite of the poets, in spite of modern usage, in spite of Ruskin's own example. I hold with those who believe that there are sanctitles in love and life to be kept in privacy inviolate.

The mode of life at Brantwood is described by Mr. Norton, who made short visite to England in 1883 and 1884, and in both years spent some days at the little country place. "Ruskin," be recalls. "had changed greatly in the ten years since our last meeting. I had left him in 1878 a man in vise ve middle life, young

tired eyes; I found him an old man, with looks eyen older than his years, with bent form, with the beard of a patriarch, with an habitual expression of weariness and with the general sir and guit of age." Xet an habitual expression of weariness and with the general sir and gait of age." Yet the visitor found that "the worn look readily gave way to the old animation, the delightful smile quickly kindled into full warmth; documently the unconquerable youthfulness of temperament reasserted itself with entire control of manner and expression, and there were hours when the old gayety of mood took possession of him with its irresistible charm. He had become, indeed, more positive, more absowith its irresatible charm. He had be-come, indeed, more positive, more abso-inte its manner, more irritable, but the essential awastnesse prevailed." Mr. Nor-ton says that, given the circumstances, no ordering of life could have been more happy for Ruskin than that at Brantwood.

We are so accustomed to associate Ruskin with writings upon art that we are apt to overlook his keen interest in science. In 1983 he writes to Mr. Norton that he would feel disposed to devote a good deal of time to geology if there were any chance of living long enough to make anything out of such a study, but he desponds when he recalls that in his time crystallography alone had become a science, to master which would need nine lives, while in hemistry there were seven new elements, all with names ending in um. In 1865, nevertheless, he says that he is working on geology, conchology and chemistry, "and what also there is of the infinite and hopeless unknown to be stumbled among. He delivered a course of lectures on glaciers, and in 1875 he was at work upon a geological treatise which he hoped would serve as a text book in colleges and schools, because in it he meant to collect and separate with extreme care what was really known of geology aside from mere theory As early as 1869 he was writing a treatise on hotany, to be named Cora Nivalis, "Snowy Proserpine." The aim of this book was to introduce young people to the study of Alpine and Arctic wild flowers. Proserpina," it was ultimately called In 1876 he delivered a series of lectures to a girls' school, professedly on the elements of crystallization, but with the purpose of wakening in the minds of young girls a ital interest in the subjects of their study. These lectures were collectively entitled Ethics of the Dust." As late as 1884 he was writing an essay in the form of a lecture on clouds, which, he says, had pulled him into a lot of work on diffraction and

In 1868 when the Nortons were in England they had asked Ruskin to meet Darwin. As it happened they had never before seen each other. We are told that "the contrast between them was complete, though each in his own way was unique and delightful. Ruskin's gracious courtesy was matched by Darwin's charming and genial simplicity. Ruskin was full of quest which interested the elder naturalist by the keenness of observation and the variety of scientific attainment which they indicated and their animated talk afforded striking Illustration of the many sympathies that inderlay the divergence of their points of view and of their methods of thought. As early as 1857 he had published some lectures under the title of "The Political tributed to Frazer's Magazine the first of four essays, afterward collected in a volume under the title of Munera Pulveris, intended as a preface to an exhaustive treatise on political economy, which "I resolved, wrote Ruskin, "to make the central work of my life."

Already in 1858 his sense of the evi in the world was growing intense and pitter, and in view of the selfish and wastefulness of the rich and the miser of the poor he was rejecting with scorn the popular and accepted theories of social duties and political economy. He had no patience with John Stuart Mill. Writing to Mr. Norton in 1869 he tells his correspondt. "Vou still confuse my morality my economy. You do not yet clearly see that I do not (in my books) dispute Mill's morality; but I flatly deny his economic science, his, and all others of the school; I say they have neither taught, nor can teach men how to make money—that they don't even know so much as what money isor what makes it become so-that they are not wise men-nor scientific men (norsay here- good men); that they have an ao cursed semblance of being all these which has deceived you and thousands more of really good and wise men; and that it is your duty to ascertain whether their sience is, in its own limits, false or true, and to understand thoroughly what they are and what it is." In the same letter he recurs to the subject: "One word more about political economy. Don't tell me any more about good and wise people 'giving their lives' to the subject, and 'differing from me.' They don't differ from me. They are absolutely contrary to and in collisio with me; they don't know the alphabe even of the science they profess; they don't know the meaning of one word they use; not of economy, for they don't know the meaning of Nonty, nor of law, nor of the Greek verb nemo; not of a house, for they have no idea of family; not of politics, for they don't know the meaning of a city (polis); not of money, for they don't know the meaning either of nummus or of pecus; and if you were to ask Mill at this moment he couldn't tell you the historica facts connected with the use of alloy in predous metals-he could tell you a few

bankers' facts and no more. In 1860 Ruskin composed four papers on Economy, wherein, like Whately, he laid great stress on the importance of a preliminary definition of terms. Writing a little later to Mr. Norton, he points out with indignation that Mr. Bright had recently declared in Parliament that "in a comm sense commercial community the adultera-tion of feed was to be looked upon only as a form of competition." This saying, which, in the place and at the time where and when it was uttered was in no grave manner questioned, is regarded by Ruekin with abhorrence. It leads him to say When I accuse Mill of being the root of nearly all immediate evil among us in England, I am in earnest—the man being looked up to as the greatest thinker, when he is, in truth, an utterly shallow and wretched segment of a human being incapable of understanding anything in the ultimate conditions of it, and countenancing with an unhappy fortune whatever is fatal lest in the popular errors of English minds." He adds: "I want you to look a little at the really great statements of conomical principle made by the true Men of all time; and you will gradually feel what deadly cast-skins of the carcase f every error they abhorred modern 'economists' have patched up their hide with!"

In a subsequent letter, Ruskin adjures his correspondent not to confuse, my spiritual Platenism with my Economical abstractions. It is not Platonism, but a mathematical axiom, that a line is length without breadth. Nor is it Platonism, but an Economical axiom that wealth mean that which conduces to life." He proceeds to point out that far from studying

wealth, as at present gathered, is a phantasm; and to prove what substance is, and is not, in it. As thus: "I have £50,000 What does & mean? I have not fifty thou What does 2 mean? I have not fifty thou-sand soversigns. Nor quild I have them if everybody else who supposed them-selves to have money asked for theirs at the same time. What I really have is fifty thousand possibilities of—a quite uncertain amount of possession, which depends wholly on other people's fancy and poverty. For if sverybody had 250,000, everybody would be as helpless as if he had nothing." Buskin also diverts attenhad nothing." Ruskin also directs attention to a fundamental distinction: All common political economy is built on the axiom. Man is a beast of prey. (It was so stated in those words by Mr. Mill at a Social Science meeting.) My political economy is based on the axiom, Man is an animal whose physical power depends on its social faiths and affections.' Which of these principles," Ruskin asks his correspondent, "do you reckon as a Theory and which as a Fact?"

It is well known that in the course of Ruskin's life a profound and far reaching change took place in his views with reference to religion. Mr. Norton recalls that, in the years immediately succeeding his first meeting with Ruskin, the latter's convictions in respect to matters of deepest con cern underwent vital alterations which disturbed the currents of his life, turning them into new and troubled channels. Youth came to its close; the prope which had supported it and the defences which had guarded it fell away one after the other, and were leaving him solitary and exposed The letters now first published indicate these conditions, though they do not set them forth in full. Ruskin has himself recorded that in 1858 his evengelical peliefs were put away forever. Mr Norton's comment on this acknowledgment is: "The recognition of the erro in the religious faith in which he had been nurtured, and which had been the basis of his mental life up to his fortieth year, was for the time being painful and dis urbing. He was too honest with himself not to recognize gradually that an important part of his teachings in the earlier volumes f 'Modern Painters,' in the 'Seven Lamps of Architecture' and in the Stones of Venice. was, in the light of his new convictions not only mistaken, but harmful; that many assertions in those books had been as erro neous as they were positive: that his whole theory in relation to art and religion must be reconstructed; and that his teachings nenceforth must often be at variance with his past doctrines. It was a hard and unsettling revelation, and from the effect of

it I believe he never wholly recovered.' Ruskin's penultimate convictions con-cerning God and immortality are set forth at length—evidently in compliance with a request—in a letter to Mr. Norton, dated in October, 1869. He begins as follows: That I am no more immortal than a gnat or a bell of heath, all nature, as far as I can read it, teaches me, and on that conviction I have henceforth to live my gnat's or heath's life." The avowal is quickly qualified, however: "But that a power hapes both the heath bell and me, of which I know and can know nothing, but of which every day I am the passive instrument and, in a permitted measure, also, the wilful helper or resister—this, as distinctly, all nature teaches me, and it is, in my presen notions of things, a vital truth. That there are good men who can for some time live without perceiving it does not make me think this truth less vital than that, under certain excitements and conditions, one could live for a certain number of days without food would make me think food

Admitting, for the sake of argument that the views of God and immortality then held by Ruskin are correct, should we teach them to children? Ruskin conceder that "if you had to teach your children that there was no evidence of any spiritual world or power I think that they would be come separate from their fellows in humanity, incapable of right sympathy-in many ways themselves degraded and unhappy That was not Ruskin's belief, however even in 1869, and he held that no harmful effect would be produced by the inculcation of his convictions. He would teach children that they must live, and die-totally-in obedience to a spiritual power, above them infinitely, inconceivably more than they themselves are above the creature whose lives are subject to them. "If you can teach children this." he says, "I think you show them the law of noblest heroism. and of the happiest and highest intellectua state. But, if you cannot do this, I know that you can and will teach them a life of love and honor. This is wholly independent of right opinion on any questions his point of belief, and it seems to me so en tirely a matter of mere example and train ing in certain modes of thought and life that I cannot understand your feeling any fear about it. I am not the least afraid of Sally's beginning to tease her pet bird or kitten because you or Mr. Darwin teach us that their tails grew by accident or that feathers were once fur, while, on the contrary, I should be much afraid that both you and I might be teased very literally, to death, with fire or brin stone, by some very plous persons, if they could read both our letters, and were allowed then to do what they liked with us." Lastly, Ruskin tells his correspondent "It seems to me that a father ought to tell his children, as their teacher, only what he knows to be true; and as their friend he may tell them, without his paternal sametion and authority, many other things which he hopes or believes, or disbeliev but in all this he need fear no respo sibility beyond that of governing his own heart. It is the law of nature that the father should teach the children, openly, wholly, fearlessly, what is in his heart. Heaven must be answerable for the end-

not you. By 1876 Ruskin had regained some frag ments of his old religious faith, m by new conceptions of the faith of the medieval Church, and by dailyings with spiritualism. In February, 1877, he wrote from Venice: "There is now quite an normous separation between you and me in a very serious part of our minds. Every day brings me more proof of the presence and power of real gods with good men; and the religion of Venice is virtually now my own-mine, at least (or rather at great est), including hers, but fully accepting it as that also of John Bunyan, and of my mother, which I was first taught." April, 1881, he records that he has begun family prayers again for his servants, and was writing two little collects every morning-one on a bit of Gospel, the other on a bit of Psalms.

The last words of Ruskin's writing which Mr. Norton received were penned in November, 1898, a few months more than forty years from the date of the beginning their friendship. They were at the foot of a letter of Mrs. Severn, the lady who watched over the old man in his later years, and were traced in pencil with a trembling hand-"From your loving J. R." After an attack of illness in 1889 Ruskin had never been able again to take up the broken thread of his autobiography. It is well

knows that the last ten years of his life were spent in retirement, but that, save for a current attacks of brain trouble, his day were peaceful and not unhappy. "He stienjoyed," Mr. Norton tells us, "the beauties of Nature and of Art, still liked to read or hear read his favorite books, still loved to listen to simple music. He was cared for with entire tenderness and devotion. His sun sar's slowly, and amid clouds, but they did not wholly darken his life." & Batch of Blographtee

A.certan value will be attached to the late Augustus T. Buell's "History of Andrew Jackson" in two volumes (Charles Scribner's Sons), because the author, an erdent ner's Bons), because the author, an ardent admirer of Jackson, succeeded in the course of his life in interviewing a number of persons who had known Jackson intimately. These interviews appear in his "History" often in full, and where they are worth enything must rank as first-class authority. Many seem trivial, in others it is clear that the narrator's memory is indistinct or faulty, but they are good as evidence, though the reader may wish that the author had sifted it before presenting it in his history. Mr. Buell's attitude is avowedly to present Jackson in the most favorable light; he goes so far as to mangle at least one document, because, as he says, it presents his hero in a way he does not like he slurs at Parton continuously, so far as we can judge, with very little reason, and he tries to smirch every American of reputation that ever came into conflict with Jackson. Surely Andrew Jackson is too big a man to be handled in that way. His life was one of the most picturesque in his tory, and Mr. Buell tells it from that point view, making the most of the frontier life, the duelling, the Creek and Seminole wars and the battle of New Orleans. The book is very readable-but it could stand some condensation, and the author's admiration of his hero would be shared by his reader with greater confidence if some eulogistic matter were out out and the darker incidents in Jackson's career were

not palpably glossed over. We agree with Dr. Emil Paxton Oberholtzer that an apology is needed for writing a new life of "Abraham Lincoln" (George W. Jacobs & Company). His suggestion that, because he never saw Lincoln and was born after his day," he is enabled to judge with more impartiality seems rather far fetched and not very sound. The need of a volume on Lincoln in the series that Dr. Oberholtzer is editing seems to be a far more practical explanation, and we don't see why he should be ashamed to say so. Admittedly there is nothing new in this book. That we can forgive, but it really does not seem to be necessary for a history of the civil war to crowd out Abraham Lincoln's personality. The further the war times recede the greater Abraham Lincoln grows, and Dr. Oberholtzer in writing his "biography" might have found that the "spirit of worship" is not entirely

inbecoming in an American.
That Mr. W. Hale White's "John Bunyan" n the "Literary Lives" series would be written in excellent English and be told delightfully was a matter of course, since he revealed himself as the author of "Mark Rutherfurd." It is a critique, however. rather than a biography, and it sinkes us that a shade more sympathy for Bunyan. or rather for the opinions that Bunyan represented, would have qualified the author better to have written about him. It is a book that deserves to be read and that will arouse discussion.

A very brief life and appreciation of "Walt Whitman," by Isaac Hull Platt, has been added to the "Beacon Biographies" (Small, Maynard & Co.). We hardly think the bibliography is complete, for a Philadelphia edition has certainly passed through our hands within two or

Years. Though he is fond of claptrap phrases and might have a higher appreciation of the dignity of the English language, Mr. Joseph M. Rogers has written a readable and interesting biography in "The True Henry Clay" (J. B. Lippincott Company). It is more devoid of attempts sensationalism than the "True" in the title implies. But why could not the author avoid such sophomorio platitudes as "He was a very great man. We shall not soon look upon his like again"? His view of Clay is eminently fair. Clay, great as he was and true to the Union, seems to be meeting the fate of all peacemakers and to be receding into the background of history, but Mr. Rogers's last words sum up his efforts admirably: "When the hour of trial came ione of those who thought that the situation called for secession dared to invoke

the name of Henry Clay." It seems strange, though perhaps it is due to the character of the series, that the late Judge William O'Connor Morris's Wellington" (G. P. Putnam s Sons), one of the "Heroes of the Nations" books. should have but ninety pages that touch on his political career. The book gives a succinct and satisfactory account of his military exploits in India, the Peninsula and the Waterloo campaign, which after

all are what keep his fame alive. A very good biography, the late Mathilde Blind's life of "George Eliot" is issued in a new edition by Little, Brown & Co. There are supplementary chapters on "George Eliot at Work" and on "Her Friends and Home Life" by Dr. Frank Waldo and Mr. G.

A. Tarkington and a bibliography.

The life of a Boston worthy, famous in his day, Father Taylor of the Sallor's Bethel. deserves wide circulation. It was written thirty-three years ago under the title "Incidents and Anecdotes of Rev. Edward T. Taylor" by the Rev. Gilbert Haven and the Hon. Thomas Russell and is now issued by a society to aid sailormen, the Boston Port and Seamen's Aid Society. To it are joined articles on Father Taylor and an account of the society. It is a fine story of a vigorous and outspoken friend of the

Doctor Mnew It Could Not Bo. Prom Collier's Weekly.
Dr. W. W. Keen, the Philadelphia surgeon

has a number of scrap books filled with anecdotes about physicians. These [anec-dotes are odd, from the fact that they all throw upon physicians a most unflattering light. To illustrate their character, Dr. Keen quoted one of them recently.

"A physician was driving through the street," he said. "A friend stopped him.

"Doctor," said the friend, anxiously. have you heard that herrible story about

"No," said the doctor. "What story is that?" "A story to the effect that he was buried "Buried alive?" said the docter. "Impos-sible. He was one of my patients."

Correcting a Mistake. From the Albany Journal. "What are you going to give your husband

"I gave my husband a sealskin cap and a pair of gives last year, and he didn't stay home one single night. If I gave him the old excuse about it being a bad night, he would say that he was well protected."

A raincost and a pair of overshoes."

"What did you buy him this year?"
"A smoking jacket, a pair of alippers and
the Life of Alexander Dowie'." The second secon

for Christmas?"

You'll be sorry.

poses of Musiera Pulveris" is to show that